

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 /052 W
-----241420Z 020672 /44

R 241207Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8447

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 6448

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINT, KE

SUBJECT: PRIVATE SECRETARY TO PRESIDENT REPORTEDLY REPLACED

1. EMBASSY HAS HEARD FROM TWO INDEPENDENT SOURCES THAT ELIUD MATHU, WHO HAS BEEN PRIVATE SECRETARY TO PRESIDENT KENYATTA FOR MOST OF LAST 13 YEARS, HAS BEEN REPLACED. SOURCES DIFFER PREDICTABLY, HOWEVER, ON WHAT WAS BEHIND REPLACEMENT. EX-NATION EDITOR GEORGE GITHII, WHO SUPPORTS VP MOI, TOLD CHARGE THAT MATHU RESIGNED ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE RECENTLY, BUT LUO SOURCE CLOSE TO EX-VP OGINGA ODINGA AND A MEMBER OF ANTI-MOI GROUP SAYS MATHU WAS FIRED AS RESULT OF AGITATION BY MAMA NGINA AND OTHERS IN PRESIDENTIAL ENTOURAGE, WHO ALLEGEDLY DISCOVERED HE (MATHU) HAD BEEN PASSING INSIDE INFORMATION TO VP MOI. ACCORDING TO LUO SOURCE, MATHU WAS REPLACED AS OF MAY 20 BY MICHAEL NJENGA, DEPUTY PERMANENT SECRETARY IN OFFICE OF PRESIDENT.

2. WHILE MATHU AS PRIVATE SECRETARY BLENDED INTO WOODWORK AND NEVER PUBLICLY APPEARED TO SEEK TO ESTABLISH HIMSELF AS POWER BROKER, FACT REMAINS THAT POSITION PROVIDES CONSTANT ACCESS TO PRESIDENT AND SOME CONTROL OVER WHOM HE SEES AND DOES NOT SEE. MATHU HAD AN IMPRESSIVE CAREER IN HIS OWN RIGHT PRIOR TO BECOMING KENYATTA'S PRIVATE SECRETARY. HE READ HISTORY AT BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD, IN LATE 30'S, BECAME FIRST AFRICAN MEMBER OF KENYA
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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN 1944, AND WAS CHIEF UN REP IN KATANGA IN 1952. IT IS MORE THAN LIKELY THAT OVER THE YEARS HE PLAYED A MORE SUBSTANTIVE ROLE THAN HE IS GENERALLY CREDITED WITH.

3. MICHAEL NGENGA, A KIKUYU, WAS A DEPARTMENT OF STATE IV GRANTEE IN 1974. SINCE HIS RETURN HE HAS BEEN

EXTREMELY HELPFUL IN SETTING UP PROVINCIAL AND DISTRICT COMMISSIONER ASPECTS OF EMBASSY'S CULTURAL PROGRAM. EMBOFFS WHO HAVE DEALT WITH NJENGA CONSIDER HIM HIGHLY INTELLIGENT AND ARTICULATE. HE IS DEMONSTRABLY FRIENDLY TO U.S.

4. EMBASSY ASSUMES REPORTS OF MATHU'S REPLACEMENT ARE ACCURATE, BUT DOES NOT KNOW WHETHER, IN FACT, HE WAS FIRED. BOTH PRO- AND ANTI-MOI GROUPS ARE SO QUICK TO PUT COLORATION FAVORABLE TO THEM ON EVERY POLITICAL AND QUASI-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT THAT TRUTH OFTEN DISAPPEARS AMIDST PROPAGANDA.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES, PERSONNEL MOVEMENTS
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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TAGS: PINT, KE, (KENYATTA, JOMO), (MATHU, ELIUD), (NGENGA, MICHAEL)
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